

How often the phantoms of joy regale us, and dance before us,—golden-winged, angel-faced, heart-warming,—and make an Elysium in which the dreaming soul bathes and feels translated to another existence, and *then* sudden as night or a cloud—a word, a step, a thought, a memory will chase them away.

Light is transmitted in all directions in straight lines, and traverses about 192,500 miles in a second of time. The color of bodies is due to the absorption of light. A body that absorbs all the rays will appear black, while one that reflects them will seem white; but some substances absorb some of the rays and reflect others. A yellow surface reflects the yellow rays, and absorbs the others; a blue surface reflects the blue; a scarlet surface absorbs all the rays except the red. Light is the cause of color in animals, plants, and minerals; but what becomes of the light that is absorbed by bodies is not known: it may possibly be latent or hidden, the same as color or heat, and enter into combination with them; for it is evident that light may be extracted from some bodies without any change being produced, as in pyrophori, or substances which absorb light, and emit it again when carried back into a dark place.

The yearly income of one firm in San Francisco, arising from ground-rents alone, is the large sum of \$250,000. In no part of the world can a better position be found for witnessing what effect the “infernal thirst for gold” has upon poor humanity, than in this city. Fine specimens of our kind may every day be seen, fretting themselves to death to add to their stock of yellow metal, which is as much needed to further their happiness, or add to their comfort, as water would be to make a fire burn,—just as if people were born for no other purpose than to make themselves the meanest slaves in striving to possess quantities of gold, which, when got, appear to cost more anxiety to keep, than it did to amass it.—*Extract from a Letter written in California.*

Casco Bay.—Few sheets of water compare for romantic and beautiful scenery with Casco Bay, an arm of which makes the harbor of Portland. Its surface is broken up with more than three hundred islands, scattered irregularly, so as to present to the tourist who may be drifting over its summer wave, an ever varying series of enchanting views. Now his boat glides safely along under some rocky shore, so near that one may seize the down-stooping forest branches and swing himself upon the jutting points,—anon some tranquil inlet opens, revealing the fisherman’s snug cottage, with its grassy slope, fruit trees, and sheltering wood in the rear, and his trimly painted skiff curtsying in the waves in some protecting nook. Again the scene assumes more wild and primitive features, craggy ledges, grown gray in opposing the gale and billow; bold promontories surmounted by trees of gigantic proportions, above which, high in the blue empyrean, perchance sails the bold eagle; long reaches of glimmering sand-beach, upon which the weary waves, journeying in from the broad sea, throw themselves as if glad to find a resting place; and then there are forest, embowered coves, and grassy openings. In short, the adventurer may sail on for days amidst ever varying, but always interesting scenes.